

## **Claims**

It is claimed:

1. A method of conducting a wagering game on a gaming machine, the gaming machine including a display device and a controller, the method comprising:
  - receiving a wager from a player;
  - displaying a plurality of value-based symbols in a random array, each of the plurality of value-based symbols displaying a number indicating an associated value;
  - detecting player selection of one of the plurality of value-based symbols;
  - in response to detecting the player selection, increasing the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol to form an increased displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol;
  - rearranging the plurality of value-based symbols such that the rearranged plurality of value-based symbols defines an award; and
  - awarding the award to the player.
2. The method of claim 1, further including enabling player selection of one of the plurality of value-based symbols after displaying the plurality of value-based symbols in the random array.
3. The method of claim 1, further including displaying a base wagering game including a plurality of possible randomly selected outcomes, at least one of the possible outcomes being a bonus game triggering event causing the plurality of value-based symbols to be displayed in the random array.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein base wagering game includes a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a reel symbol array, the symbols on the reels including the value-based symbols, the bonus game triggering event including the value-based symbols aligned with each other in the reel symbol array.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the gaming machine comprises a video slot machine, and wherein displaying the plurality of value-based symbols includes displaying a plurality of value-based video reel symbols.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein the gaming machine comprises an adaptable mechanical spinning reel slot machine including a plurality of electro-mechanical reels having a plurality of reels symbols displayed thereon, and wherein displaying the plurality of value-based symbols includes displaying a plurality of value-based video reel symbols provided by a flat panel transmissive display configured to overlay the plurality of value-based video reel symbols upon a portion of the plurality of electro-mechanical reels.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of value-based symbols includes at least three value-based symbols.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein increasing the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol includes incrementing the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol by a randomly-selected integer value.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of value-based symbols are rearranged in view of the random array.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein rearranging the plurality of value-based symbols includes rearranging the displayed numbers, the rearranged displayed numbers including the increased displayed number and being respective digits of a credit amount that defines the award.

11. A method of conducting a wagering game on a gaming machine in response to receiving a wager from a player, the gaming machine including a display device and a controller, the method comprising:

displaying a plurality of value-based symbols in a random array, each of the plurality of value-based symbols displaying a number indicating an associated value;  
increasing the displayed number of one of the plurality of value-based symbols;  
rearranging the plurality of value-based symbols such that the rearranged plurality defines an award; and  
awarding the award to the player.

12. The method of claim 11, further including increasing the displayed number of the one of the plurality of value-based symbols in response to detecting player selection of the one of the plurality of value-based symbols.

13. The method of claim 12, further including enabling player selection of the one of the plurality of value-based symbols after displaying the plurality of value-based symbols in the random array.

14. The method of claim 12, further including displaying a base wagering game including a plurality of possible randomly-selected outcomes, at least one of the

possible outcomes being a bonus game triggering event causing the plurality of value-based symbols to be displayed in the random array.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein base wagering game includes a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a reel symbol array, the symbols on the reels including the value-based symbols, the bonus game triggering event including the value-based symbols aligned with each other in the reel symbol array.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the plurality of value-based symbols includes at least three value-based symbols.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein increasing the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol includes incrementing the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol by a randomly-selected integer value.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein the plurality of value-based symbols are rearranged in view of the random array.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein rearranging the plurality of value-based symbols includes rearranging the displayed numbers associated with the respective value-based symbols, the rearranged displayed numbers including the increased displayed number associated with the one of the plurality of value-based symbols.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the rearranged displayed numbers comprise respective digits of a credit amount that defines the award.

21. A gaming machine comprising:

a value input device;

a video display device; and

a controller operatively coupled to the video display device and the value input device, the controller including a processor and a memory coupled to the processor, the controller being programmed to:

display a plurality of value-based symbols in a random array, each of the plurality of value-based symbols displaying a number indicating an associated value;

detect player selection of one of the plurality of value-based symbols;

increase the displayed number of the player selected value-based symbol in response to detecting the player selection;

rearrange the plurality of value-based symbols such that the rearranged plurality defines an award; and

award the award to the player.

22. A method of conducting a wagering game on a gaming machine controlled by a controller in response to a wager, the method comprising:

displaying on a display device of the gaming machine, an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal an associated plurality of icons, the plurality of icons including a plurality of game-theme icons and a wild icon;

receiving successive selections of the tiles;

selectively revealing a first group of related game-theme icons associated with the selected tiles;

selectively revealing a second group of related game-theme icons associated with the selected tiles, the second group different from the first group;

selectively revealing the wild icon associated with the selected tiles after revealing the first group and the second group; and

simultaneously awarding a first award and a second award.

23. The method of claim 22, further including:

associating the wild icon with the first group to form a first match, the first match yielding the first award; and

associating the wild icon with the second group to form a second match, the second match yielding the second award.

24. The method of claim 23, further including displaying a legend adjacent to the assemblage of selectable tiles, the legend displaying a plurality of matches and respective awards, each of the plurality of matches including a plurality of related game-theme icons.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein the first group of related game-theme icons comprises a first pair of like game-theme icons, and wherein the second group of related game-theme icons comprises a second pair of like game-theme icons.

26. The method of claim 22, further including displaying a base wagering game including a plurality of possible randomly-selected outcomes, at least one of the possible outcomes being a bonus game triggering event causing the assemblage of selectable tiles to be displayed.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the base wagering game includes a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a

reel symbol array, and wherein the bonus game triggering event includes a predetermined arrangement of selected symbols on the stopped reels.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the first award comprises a first number of free reel spins, and wherein the second award comprises a second number of free reel spins.

29. The method of claim 28, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the first number of free reel spins by a first randomly generated number, and multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the second number of free spins by a second randomly generated number.

30. The method of claim 22, wherein the gaming machine comprises a video slot machine, and wherein displaying the assemblage of selectable tiles includes displaying a video generated assemblage of selectable tiles.

31. The method of claim 22, wherein the gaming machine comprises an adaptable mechanical spinning reel slot machine including a plurality of electro-mechanical reels having a plurality of reels symbols displayed thereon, and wherein displaying the assemblage of selectable tiles includes displaying a video generated assemblage of selectable tiles provided by a flat panel transmissive display configured to overlay the assemblage of selectable tiles upon a portion of the plurality of electro-mechanical reels.

32. The method of claim 22, wherein the first award comprises a first credit amount, and wherein the second award comprises a second credit amount.

33. A gaming machine controlled by a controller in response to a wager, the gaming machine comprising a simultaneous multiple award feature indicated on a display device, the display device initially displaying an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal a plurality of icons, the tiles being successively selected revealing a first group of related game-theme icons and revealing a second group of related game-theme icons and revealing a wild icon after revealing the first group and the second group, the simultaneous multiple award feature simultaneously awarding a first award based upon the first group and awarding a second award based upon the second group.

34. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the wild icon is associated with the first group to form a first match, the first match yielding the first award, and wherein the wild icon is associated with the second group to form a second match, the second match yielding the second award.

35. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the first group of related game-theme icons comprises a first pair of like game-theme icons, wherein the second group of related game-theme icons comprises a second pair of like game-theme icons, and wherein the second pair is different from the first pair.

36. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the display device comprises a video display.

37. The gaming machine of claim 33, further comprising a base wagering game including a plurality of possible base wagering game outcomes, at least one of the plurality of possible base wagering game outcomes being an event triggering the assemblage of selectable tiles to be displayed.



38. The gaming machine of claim 37, wherein the gaming machine comprises a slot machine having a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a symbol array, and wherein the event includes a predetermined arrangement of selected symbols on the stopped reels.

39. The gaming machine of claim 38, wherein the plurality of symbol-bearing reels comprises a plurality of electro-mechanical symbol-bearing reels, and wherein the display device comprises a flat panel transmissive display configured to overlay the assemblage of selectable tiles upon a portion of the plurality of electro-mechanical symbol-bearing reels.

40. The gaming machine of claim 38, wherein the first award comprises a first number of free reel spins, and wherein the second award comprises a second number of free reel spins.

41. The gaming machine of claim 40, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the first number of free reel spins and at least one of the second number of free spins by a randomly generated number.

42. The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the assemblage of selectable tiles is arranged as a matrix having multiple rows and columns.

43. A simultaneous multiple award feature for a gaming machine controlled by a controller, the simultaneous multiple award feature being indicated on a display device, the simultaneous multiple award feature comprising a:

a player selection stage including an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal a plurality of icons, the tiles being successively selected to reveal respective icons until a tile is selected that produces a multiple award outcome; and

a bonus stage triggered by the multiple award outcome, each award of the multiple award outcome generated in the player selection stage earning the player an opportunity to win a respective bonus in the bonus stage.

44. The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein the tiles associated with each award of the multiple award outcome are linked with a group of related icons and a wild icon.

45. The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein the tiles associated with each award of the multiple award outcome are linked with a pair of like game-theme icons and a wild icon.

46. The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein each award is associated with a predetermined number of free spins of reels of a slot gaming machine.

47. The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 46, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the predetermined number of free spins by a randomly generated number.

48. The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein the display device comprises a video display.